

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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P R 100732Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6824
INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0109

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EG SO ET IV UR OAU
SUBJ: OAU SECGEN'S VIEWS ON NEGOTIATIONS AND ALSO MENGISTU'S
REVOLUTIONARY ZEAL

SUMMARY: OAU SECGEN PRIVATELY CALLS FOR DIRECT US-USSR
NEGOTIATIONS ON OGADEN SETTLEMENT AND REMOVAL OF MASSIVE
SOVIET MILITARY INTERVENTION. IN MEANTIME, US IS FOLLOWING
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CORRECT POLICY OF NO ARMS TO EITHER SIDE AS LONG AS CONFLICT
CONTINUES. ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN HAVE TAKEN ONLY FIRST STEP
TOWARDS RECONCILIATION, ATTAINMENT OF WHICH MUST AWAIT OUT-
COME OF ERITREAN CONFLICT. SECGEN SEES GREATER ETHIOPIAN
WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE ON ERITREA THAN ON OGADEN. ETEKI
EMPHASIZED MENGISTU'S REVOLUTIONARY ZEAL MUST BE RECOGNIZED
IN ANY EFFORT TO DRAW HIM INTO REGIONAL SOLUTION FOR OGADEN.

1. OAU SECRETARY GENERAL WILLIAM ETEKI MBOUMOUA SAID, "I REGRET HAVING TO ADMIT IT, BUT DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN US AND USSR ARE NECESSARY BEFORE THERE CAN BE A SETTLEMENT IN THE OGADEN CONFLICT AND A SUBSEQUENT REMOVAL OF SOVIET MILITARY INTERVENTION." THIS WAS HIS PRINCIPAL CONCLUSION TO A REVIEW OF OAU EFFORTS TO SETTLE OGADEN ISSUE WHICH HE PRESENTED TO CHARGE DURING DISCUSSION AT OAU HEADQUARTERS JAN 9. ETEKI LEFT NO DOUBT THAT OAU SECRETARIAT CONSIDERS SOMALIA THE AGGRESSOR AND THAT ETHIOPIA HAS EVERY RIGHT TO DEFEND ITS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. HE, NEVERTHELESS, EXPRESSED EQUALLY DEEP CONCERN OVER "MASSIVE RUSSIAN INTERVENTION" AND BELIEVES IT MUST BE EXTRACTED AS SOON AS SETTLEMENT REACHED. WITHOUT BIG POWER NEGOTIATIONS, OAU IS HELPLESS, HE LAMENTED, BUT AT SAME TIME HE SEEMED TO TAKE FOR GRANTED THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE MORE FIGHTING AND MORE LIVES LOST BEFORE ANY PROGRESS CAN BE ACHIEVED.

2. RETURNING TO HIS PROPOSAL FOR DIRECT US-USSR TALKS, ETEKI SUGGESTED THAT THE DIRECT ANTAGONISTS, ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA, AND THE INDIRECT ONES -- "IRAN, SAUDI ARABIA AND PERHAPS KENYA" -- COULD SUBSEQUENTLY JOIN WITH SUPER POWERS IN NEGOTIATIONS ON HORN. IN THE MEANTIME, US IS FOLLOWING CORRECT POLICY OF SUPPLYING ARMS TO NEITHER BELLIGERENT, HE AFFIRMED, AND HE HOPE PRESIDENT CARTER'S TRIP IRAN, SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT WILL NOT LEAD TO A CHANGE IN THAT POLICY. CONFIDENTIAL

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HE ACCEPTS AS FACT SAUDIS AND IRANIANS ARE SUPPLYING ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA IN NON-US ORIGIN WEAPONS.

3. DURING DISCUSSION OF ETHIO-SUDANESE AFFAIRS, ETEKI STATED, "WE SHOULD BE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS. AS LONG AS ERITREAN ISSUE IS ALIVE, THERE CAN BE NO REAL RAPPROCHEMENT." AS LONG AS ERITREANS FIGHT, SUDANESE WILL "HAVE" TO CONTINUE TO GIVE THEM SOME LEVEL OF SUPPORT, HE INDICATED. HE THUS CONSIDERS FREETOWN MEETING ONLY A START ALONG RIGHT PATH, BUT EVENTUAL SOLUTION IS POSSIBLE IN THAT ETHIOPIANS HAVE SHOWN GREATER WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE ON ERITREAN ISSUE THAN ON OGADEN.

4. CHARGE SOUNDED ETEKI ON "POSSIBILITY OF ETHIOPIA'S AND SOMALIA'S ACCEPTING AN AUTONOMOUS OGADEN UNDER ETHIOPIAN SOVEREIGNTY, PARTICULARLY IF THERE WERE A LARGE-SCALE MULTILATERAL OFFER OF REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE AS BAIT, EXPANDED PERHAPS INTO PROGRAM FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO ETHNIC SOMALIS IN KENYA AND SOMALIA, ITSELF. ETEKI DOUBTED THAT MENGISTU WOULD ENTERTAIN IDEA FOR LONG SINCE "HE IS DETERMINED TO BRING ABOUT A TOTAL REVOLUTION IN ETHIOPIA AND WOULD NOT ACCEPT DECENTRALIZATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OF OGADEN ON ANYTHING BUT REVOLUTIONARY TERMS." ETEKI EM-
PLIED THAT WESTERN COUNTRIES COULD HARDLY BE EXPECTED TO
MEET MENGISTU'S TERMS. ETEKI AGREED MENGISTU MAY BE SOMEWHAT
PRAGMATIC IN DEALING WITH WEST AND IN DRIVE TO MAINTAIN
POWER, BUT HE THOUGHT WE SHOULD BE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT
HIS REVOLUTIONARY ZEAL.
MATHERON

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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